

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method of identifying a visitor at a network site comprising:  
receiving an address from a first visitor computer and a first characteristic of a second visitor computer; and  
generating a first visitor identifier using the address and the first characteristic.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein generating the first visitor identifier is performed using only the address and information within a user-agent string of a request originating from the second visitor computer.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the user-agent string includes a browser identifier for a browser application on the second visitor computer and compatibility information regarding the browser application.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the first characteristic of the second visitor computer comprises a type of computer, a CPU identifier, an OS, a browser application, a version of a browser application, compatibility information regarding the browser application, locale information, an accessory that can be activated by the browser application, a display size, a resolution setting, or whether a programming language is enabled.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the first visitor computer is different from the second visitor computer.
6. The method of claim 5, further comprising sending the first characteristic from a second visitor computer to the first visitor computer before generating the first visitor identifier.
7. The method of claim 5, further comprising:  
receiving the address from a first visitor computer and a second characteristic of a third visitor computer, wherein the third visitor computer is different from the first and second visitor computers; and  
generating a second visitor identifier using the address and the second characteristic.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein:
  - the first and second visitor computers are the same computer;
  - the first characteristic is a first characteristic of a first browsing environment; and
  - the method further comprises:
    - receiving the address from a first visitor computer and a second characteristic of a second browsing environment, wherein the first and second browsing environments use the same OS, browser application, and version of browser application; and
    - generating a second visitor identifier using the address and the second characteristic.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein generating the first visitor identifier is performed without the use of a cookie.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein generating the first visitor identifier is performed using only information within an initial request from the second visitor computer during a session.
11. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - requesting information regarding a second characteristic of the second visitor computer after receiving the address and the first characteristic; and
  - receiving the information regarding the second characteristic of the second visitor computer,wherein generating is performed using the address, the first characteristic, and the second characteristic.

12. A data processing system readable medium comprising code embodied in a data processing system readable medium, the code comprising:
  - an instruction for accessing an address from a first visitor computer and a first characteristic of a second visitor computer; and
  - an instruction for generating a first visitor identifier using the address and the first characteristic.
13. The data processing system readable medium of claim 12, wherein the instruction for generating the first visitor identifier is executed using only the address and information within a user-agent string of a request originating from the second visitor computer.
14. The data processing system readable medium of claim 13, wherein the user-agent string includes a browser identifier for a browser application on the second visitor computer and compatibility information regarding the browser application.
15. The data processing system readable medium of claim 12, wherein the first characteristic of the second visitor computer comprises a type of computer, a CPU identifier, an OS, a browser application, a version of a browser application, compatibility information regarding the browser application, locale information, an accessory that can be activated by the browser application, a display size, a resolution setting, or whether a programming language is enabled.
16. The data processing system readable medium of claim 12, wherein the first visitor computer is different from the second visitor computer.
17. The data processing system readable medium of claim 16, the code further comprises:
  - an instruction for accessing the address from a first visitor computer and a second characteristic of a third visitor computer, wherein the third visitor computer is different from the first and second visitor computers; and
  - an instruction for generating a second visitor identifier using the address and the second characteristic.

18. The data processing system readable medium of claim 12, wherein:
  - the first and second visitor computers are the same computer;
  - the first characteristic is a first characteristic of a first browsing environment; and
  - the code further comprises:
    - an instruction for receiving the address from a first visitor computer and a second characteristic of a second browsing environment, wherein the first and second browsing environments use the same OS, browser application, and version of browser application; and
    - an instruction for generating a second visitor identifier using the address and the second characteristic.
19. The data processing system readable medium of claim 12, wherein the instruction for generating the first visitor identifier is executed without the use of a cookie.
20. The data processing system readable medium of claim 12, wherein the instruction for generating the first visitor identifier is performed using only information within an initial request from the second visitor computer during a session.
21. The data processing system readable medium of claim 12, the code further comprises:
  - an instruction for requesting information regarding a second characteristic of the second visitor computer, wherein the instruction for requesting information is executed after the instruction for accessing the address and the first characteristic; and
  - an instruction for receiving the information regarding the second characteristic of the second visitor computer,wherein generating is performed using the address, the first characteristic, and the second characteristic.

22. A system for identifying a visitor at a network site comprising:
- individual visitor computers;
  - a network site computer; and
  - a visitor control computer bidirectionally coupled to the individual visitor computers and the network site computer,
- wherein:
- the visitor control computer is configured to not provide an address of any individual visitor computer to the network site computer; and
  - the network site computer is configured to generate a visitor identifier from an address received from the visitor control computer and a characteristic of at one of the individual visitor computers.
23. The system of claim 22, wherein at least one of the individual visitor computers is not configured to receive cookies.
24. The system of claim 18, wherein the visitor control computer regulates communications across a firewall, and the network site computer and any of the individual visitor computers communicate to each other via the visitor control computer.
25. The system of claim 22, wherein the visitor control computer provides a characteristic of at least one of the individual visitor computers to the network site computer.